

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-17. **Please also add** new claims 18-28 as shown in the complete list of claims that is presented below.

Claims 1-17 (cancelled).

18. (new) A node information management system, comprising:

a plurality of nodes connected via transmission links; and

a collecting apparatus which is connected with said plurality of nodes and collects respective node information from said plurality of nodes,

wherein said plurality of nodes include first and second nodes, said second node serving as a backup node for storing first node information about said first node as first backup information,

wherein said first node comprises a first node information generating section to generate said first node information, a first node information storing section to store said first node information, and a first management section to make said first node information storing section store said first node information and to send said first node information to said second node,

wherein said second node has a first backup information storing section to store said first node information, and

wherein said collecting apparatus, if it judges that said first node information cannot be collected from said first node, collects said first node information from said

second node on the basis of a correspondence relation between said first node and said second node.

19. (new) The node information management system according to claim 18, wherein said first node functions as a backup node with respect to another node in said plurality of nodes, and further comprises another backup information storing section to store backup information about said another node in said first node.

20. (new) The node information management system according to claim 19, wherein said first node and said another node are connected by a link that does not pass through other nodes.

21. (new) The node information management system according to claim 19, wherein said first node and said another node are connected along a link path that passes through at least one other node.

22. (new) The node information management system according to claim 19, wherein said another node is said second node.

23. (new) The node information management system according to claim 18, wherein said second node comprises a second node information generating section to

generate second node information about said second node, a second node information storing section to store said second node information, and a second management section to make said second node information storing section store said second node information and to send said second node information to a further node.

24. (new) The node information management system according to claim 23, wherein said second node and said further node are connected by a link that does not pass through other nodes.

25. (new) The node information management system according to claim 23, wherein said second node and said further node are connected along a link path that passes through at least one other node.

26. (new) The node information management system according to claim 23, wherein said further node is said first node.

27. (new) The node information management system according to claim 18, wherein said first and second nodes are connected by a link that does not pass through other nodes.

28. (new) The node information management system according to claim 18, wherein said first and second nodes are connected along a link path that passes through at least one other node.